

National Renewable Energy Laboratory  
Managed and Operated by the Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC  
Request for Proposals Number RHB-4-42432

**“Service Agreement for Testing and Inspection Services”**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**READ THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY**

This solicitation is being conducted under the procedures for competitive subcontracts established by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). NREL will award a subcontract based on the following.

All Statement of Work (SOW) requirements being met with the best combination of:

- Technical factors (based on qualitative merit criteria), and
- Evaluated price (or cost)

**SMALL BUSINESS SET-ASIDE**

This source selection action is being conducted as a total small-business set aside. The North American Industry Classification System code for this procurement is 541380. See item 12.

Issue Date: 10/27/2014      Due Date: 11/17/2014      Time Due: 4:00 pm, Mountain Time

**Technical questions must be received in writing no later than 11/05/2014**

- 1. Solicitation Type**      Best Value Selection  
Fixed Unit Price
- 2. NREL RFP Contact**      George Nolte, Subcontract Administrator  
National Renewable Energy Laboratory  
15013 Denver West Parkway, RSF030  
Golden, CO 80401-3305  
Phone: (303) 384-7328

Email: [george.nolte@nrel.gov](mailto:george.nolte@nrel.gov)

**Electronic (PDF) copies of forms and appendices can be found at:**  
[http://www.nrel.gov/business\\_opportunities/related\\_docs.html](http://www.nrel.gov/business_opportunities/related_docs.html)

- 3. Project description**  
As specified in the Statement of Work, “Service Agreement for Testing and Inspection Services”, dated 9/18/14 (Attachment 1).

#### **4. Proposed subcontract award and period of performance**

The Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC has entered into Contract No. DE-AC36-08GO28308 with the Department of Energy (DOE), an agency of the U.S. Government, for the management and operation of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (hereinafter called "NREL"). All references to "NREL" in this solicitation shall mean the Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC.

It is the intent of NREL to award one (1) fixed unit price subcontract under this solicitation. The anticipated period of performance is a basic period (12 months) plus four (4) 12-month option periods, for a potential of sixty (60) months, if all options are exercised. The anticipated ceiling amount is \$200,000.00 per twelve (12) month period for a total of \$1,000,000.00 for the entire sixty (60) month period if all option periods are exercised.

Anticipated award of the subcontract is **12/15/14**.

#### **5. Competitive negotiated subcontract using Best Value Selection**

This solicitation shall be conducted using Best Value Selection that results in an award that is most advantageous to NREL based on the best value combination of (a) evaluated qualitative merit and (b) evaluated price (cost) of the offers submitted.

Best Value Selection is based on the premise that, if all offers are of approximately equal qualitative merit, award will be made to the offeror with the lowest evaluated price (cost). However, NREL will consider awarding to an offeror with a higher evaluated price (cost) if the offer demonstrates the difference in price (cost) is commensurate with the higher qualitative merit. Conversely, NREL will consider awarding to an offeror with a lower evaluated qualitative merit if the price (cost) differential between it and other offers warrant doing so.

#### **6. Qualitative Merit Criteria for Best Value Selection**

The Statement of Work (Attachment 1) in this Request for Proposal serves as NREL's baseline requirements that must be met by each offeror.

The qualitative merit criteria establish what NREL considers the technical factors valuable in an offer. These qualitative merit criteria are performance-based and permit selection of a higher priced offer that provides higher qualitative merit.

The following qualitative merit criteria will be used to determine the technical value of the offer in meeting the objectives of the solicitation.

Each qualitative merit criteria is weighted as assigned below:

##### **6.1 Health, Safety, and Quality Control (30 points)**

- A. Corporate Health and Safety Plan. The proposal shall include a health & safety plan that addresses the following:
  - 1) Provide your company's Safety Plan. Describe how you ensure that your employees are familiar with the plan. See Attachment 4 for Safety Plan submission

requirement. If your company is selected for potential award, an acceptable safety plan will be required for NREL's review and acceptance prior to starting work.

- 2) Describe all safety training conducted with personnel and list the safety topics discussed. Describe if the training is conducted "in-house" or outsourced?
  - 3) List the types of safety training your key personnel have completed and the safety training required for the personnel proposed in your offer.
  - 4) Experience Modification Rate during each of the past three years and three year average. Preference will be given to firms who have maintained a 3-year average EMR of less than 1.0. (Attachment 5).
- B. Quality Control Plan. The proposal shall include a quality control plan that address the minimum requirements the Statement of Work. The adequacy of the plan will be evaluated.

## **6.2 Experience: (30 points)**

- A. Relevant experience of the company on current and past projects of this type and complexity.
- B. Provide a list of ten (10) similar contracts or subcontracts within the past five (5) years to include the following information:
- 1) name of the contracting party,
  - 2) contracting party's point of contact and telephone number,
  - 3) contract or subcontract amount,
  - 4) type of contract or subcontract
  - 5) period of performance,
  - 6) title or description of the contract or subcontract, and;
  - 7) Status of the contract or subcontract, i.e. completed, terminated, or partially terminated. If terminated, state reason for termination.

## **6.3 Capability: (30 points)**

- A. Project Management. Provide a project management outline or schematic of how the Offeror plans to manage this Testing and Inspection Services (TIS) Service Agreement, to include availability of resources, type and extent of training. Identify the following:
- 1) Project Manager and Key personnel responsible for major projects.
  - 2) Submit resumes for the Project Manager and Key Personnel identified above that reflects and years of experience in performing each particular aspect of testing and inspection services. Include all relevant certifications, qualifications, and licenses. Include the availability of the key personnel named to perform the required services.
  - 3) Equipment and Facilities. Provide a list of all major testing equipment or facilities which are required for performance of this subcontract. Include a description of the maintenance, testing, and certification program followed for all equipment to ensure it is maintained in proper working condition.

- B. Organizational Structure. Describe the Offeror's organizational structure and provide a complete and detailed organizational chart.

**6.4 Location / proximity to job site (10 points)**

Company location/proximity to the job site. Preferences will be given to firms who have a physical location within a 75 mile radius to the NREL campus.

**7. Price (cost) evaluation for Best Value Selection**

After evaluation of the qualitative merit criteria, the following price (cost) evaluation will be used to determine the best value of the offer in meeting the objectives of the solicitation.

The combined qualitative merit value will be considered approximately of equal importance to the price (cost).

**8. Evaluation process**

NREL will evaluate offers in two general steps:

**Step One—Initial Evaluation**

An initial evaluation will be performed to determine if all required information has been provided for an acceptable offer. Offerors may be contacted only for clarification purposes during the initial evaluation. Offerors shall be notified if their offer is determined unacceptable and the reasons for rejection will be provided. Unacceptable offers will be excluded from further consideration.

**Step Two—Discussion, Selection, Negotiation, and Award**

All acceptable offers will be evaluated against the Statement of Work (Attachment 1) and the qualitative merit criteria listed above. Based on this evaluation, NREL has the option, depending on the specific circumstances of the offers received, to use one of the following methods of selection:

- (a) make individual selection(s), conduct negotiations, and make an award(s);
- (b) conduct parallel negotiations with all offerors and make award(s);
- (c) conduct discussions with all offerors, select successful finalists, conduct parallel negotiations with successful finalists, and then make award(s);
- (d) conduct discussions with all offerors, conduct parallel negotiations with the finalists, select successful finalist(s), and then make award(s);
- (e) select successful finalists, conduct successive negotiations, and make successive selections and awards;
- (f) make no award(s).

**9. Proposal preparation and submission information**

In order to be considered timely a hard copy of the proposal must be submitted by the due date and time specified. An electronic copy of both technical and pricing proposal shall be provided to the Subcontract Administrator's email address. Or, the electronic copy may be included as an electronic storage device with the hard copy of the proposal. Submission of the electronic copy alone does not satisfy timeliness

requirements. **The electronic version of the pricing proposal should be submitted in Microsoft Excel or other interactive format.**

- a. The proposal must include a title page, including the RFP title and number, name of your organization and principal investigator (with postal address, telephone and fax numbers, and email address). The title should be succinct and capture the essence of your offer.
- b. Formatting instructions
  - A page is defined as one side of an 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper.
  - Use a 12-point font.
  - Maintain at least 1-inch margins on all sides.
  - Copies may be either single or double sided.
- c. A **technical proposal** in an original and six (6) copies directed toward meeting the requirements of NREL's Statement of Work (Attachment 1).

The Technical Proposal shall be organized in the following sections:

- 1) Safety, Health and Quality Control;
- 2) Experience;
- 3) Capability;

Provide your response to each of the qualitative merit criteria listed in Section 6.4) The total proposal shall not exceed thirty (30) pages, excluding the quality control plan, the safety plan, the representation and certifications and the resumes of key personnel.

- d. A completed price proposal in an original and four (4) copies submitted with the offer for the basic period and each option period.

Offerors may submit their price proposal on their own forms if it includes the same information as the NREL form. The offeror's price and delivery terms must be valid for 90 days from the date of the offer. The price (cost) proposal should include support documentation for all categories of the proposed price (cost). The price (cost) proposal should separate price (cost) for lower-tier subcontract(s) and include support documentation for all categories of the proposed lower-tier subcontract(s) price (cost). (see price (Cost) proposal preparation instructions (Attachment 2)
- e. The pricing proposal shall include:
  - 1) Completed Labor Rate Break-Down Proposal Form (Attachment 2) which reflects all labor categories expected to be used during performance and the fully burdened labor rate for each category. Provide a separate worksheet for the basic period and each of the four (4) option periods.
  - 2) Completed Fixed Unit Price Proposal Form (Attachment 3) which provides a proposed price for each task listed. Provide prices for the basic period and each of the four (4) option periods.
- f. A completed "**Representations and Certifications**" form in an original. Form can be found at: [http://www.nrel.gov/business\\_opportunities/related\\_docs.html](http://www.nrel.gov/business_opportunities/related_docs.html)

- g. A completed “**Environmental, Health and Safety Subcontract Risk Evaluation Worksheet**” (Attachment 6)
- h. A copy of your company’s safety plan.
- i. EITHER the “**Organizational Conflicts of Interest Representation Statement**” OR the “**Organizational Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Statement**” (see NREL website below: [http://www.nrel.gov/business\\_opportunities/related\\_docs.html](http://www.nrel.gov/business_opportunities/related_docs.html))
- j. A cover letter including a **summary statement** indicating acceptance of the proposed Statement of Work or any change with the reason(s).
- k. A cover letter including either acceptance or change/exception with reason to the subcontract schedule and the standard terms and conditions and/or the intellectual property terms and conditions in the appendices. The offeror will explain any proposed change/exception with respect to the subcontract schedule and terms and conditions. Any proposed change/exception must contain sufficient amplification and justification to permit evaluation. Such proposed changes/exceptions will not, of themselves, automatically cause an offer to be termed unacceptable. However, a large number of proposed changes/exception or one or more significant exceptions not providing any obvious benefit to the NREL or the Department of Energy may result in rejection of such offer as unacceptable.
- l. This solicitation **does not** allow the submittal of facsimile proposals.
- m. This solicitation **does not** commit NREL to pay costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal in response to this RFP.

## 10. Solicitation Provisions—full text provided

### a. Late submissions, modifications, and withdrawals of offers

Offers, or modifications to them, received from qualified organizations after the latest date specified for receipt may be considered if received prior to award, and NREL determines that there is a potential price (cost), technical, or other advantage, as compared to the other offers received. However, depending on the circumstances surrounding the late submission or modification, NREL may consider a late offer to be an indication of the offeror’s performance capabilities, resulting in downgrading of the offer in the technical evaluation process. Offers may be withdrawn by written notice received at any time before award. Offers may be withdrawn in person by an offeror or an authorized representative, if the representative’s identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the offer before award.

### b. Restrictions on disclosure and use of data

Offerors who include in their proposals data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the government or NREL, except for evaluation purposes shall—

1. Mark the title page with the following legend:  
“This offer includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the government or NREL and shall not be used or disclosed—in whole or in part—for any purpose other than to evaluate this offer. If, however, a subcontract is awarded to this offeror as a result of—or in connection with—the submission of this data, the government or NREL shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting subcontract. This restriction does not limit the government or NREL’s right to use information contained in this data if obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained on pages [insert page and line numbers or other identification of pages] of this offer”; and
2. Mark each page of data it wishes to restrict with the following legend:  
“Use or disclosure of data contained on this page is subject to the restriction on the title page of this offer.”

c. **Reserved**

d. **Disclaimer**

NEITHER THE UNITED STATES; NOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY; NOR ALLIANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY, LLC; NOR ANY OF THEIR CONTRACTORS, SUBCONTRACTORS, OR THEIR EMPLOYEES MAKE ANY WARRANTY, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, OR ASSUME ANY LEGAL LIABILITY OR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCURACY, COMPLETENESS, OR USEFULNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE OF ANY OF THE TECHNICAL INFORMATION OR DATA ATTACHED OR OTHERWISE PROVIDED HEREIN AS REFERENCE MATERIAL.

e. **Solicitation disputes**

The General Accountability Office and the Department of Energy do not accept or rule on disputes for solicitations for Requests for Proposals issued by Management and Operating Contractors for the Department of Energy (operators of Department of Energy National Laboratories). Should an offeror have any concerns regarding the NREL solicitation process or selection determination, the offeror may contact Mark Barela, Advocate for Commercial Practices, at (303) 384-7559. NREL will address each concern received from an offeror on an individual basis.

**11. Solicitation provisions—incorporated by reference—general access**

This solicitation incorporates one or more solicitation provisions by reference with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. The following documents can be downloaded from the NREL **general access** website at [http://www.nrel.gov/business\\_opportunities/related\\_docs.html](http://www.nrel.gov/business_opportunities/related_docs.html) or the NREL RFP Contact (see item 2) will make full text available upon request.

- NREL Standard Terms and Conditions:
  - Appendix B-6 dated 7/11/14

- NREL Intellectual Property Provisions:
  - Appendix C-3 dated 3/26/12
- NREL Terms and Conditions for Subcontracts in excess of \$650,000.00
  - Appendix D-1 dated 7/11/14
- NREL Representations and Certifications for Subcontracts
- NREL Conflicts of Interest Forms

**12. NAICS Code and Small Business Size Standard [Use and Edit as needed]**

- a. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) for this solicitation is 541380 Testing Laboratories.
- b. The small business size standard for this NAICS code is \$15 million or less in annual receipts. (Annual receipts of a concern means the average annual gross revenue for the last three fiscal years.)

**13. Notice Regarding NREL Payments to Subcontractors**

It is NREL's standard practice to make all payments to domestic subcontractors via electronic (ACH) payments or to international subcontractors via wire transfers. Any Offeror receiving notification of an award under this solicitation must complete and submit a "Request for ACH/Wire Banking Information" form to the applicable NREL Subcontract Administrator. Payments to subcontractors will be deposited directly into the subcontractor's designated bank account in accordance with the banking account/wire transfer information provided on the form by an authorized company representative. An electronic (PDF) copy of the form can be found at: [http://www.nrel.gov/business\\_opportunities/related\\_docs.html](http://www.nrel.gov/business_opportunities/related_docs.html).

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1 – Statement of Work dated 8/21/14
- Attachment 2 – Labor Rate Breakdown Proposal Form
- Attachment 3 – Fixed Unit Price Proposal Form
- Attachment 4 – Sample Task Ordering Agreement (TOA)
- Attachment 5 – NREL Guidelines for Preparing a Subcontractor's Health & Safety Plan – Non-Construction
- Attachment 6 – Environmental, Safety and Health Subcontract Risk Evaluation Worksheet dated November 2012